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NEWS RELEASE

June 4, 2007

Contact: Johnnie Moore, professor, UM Department of Geosciences, 406-243-6807.

UM PROFESSOR'S WORK TO AIR NATIONWIDE ON NPR

MISSOULA –

The latest in the long – and often sad – saga of the Clark Fork River will be broadcast around the country this summer on more than 200 National Public Radio stations in quick, two-minute clips featuring University of Montana geology Professor Johnnie Moore.

Moore and his colleague Michael Hochella of Virginia Tech University recorded some of their ongoing research on the contamination of the Clark Fork for NPR's "Pulse of the Planet" program.

"Mike got hooked up with NPR somehow, and we record a bunch of stuff and NPR edits it down," Moore said.

He and Hochella will be featured in seven "Pulse of the Planet" episodes that will span their work from gathering the uncontaminated water of Rock Creek to act as a control to testing the heavy metal-laden water of the Clark Fork in state-of-the-art Virginia Tech laboratories.

Moore said his partner takes the samples collected in Montana back to his home university and uses "fancy machines" that are able to identify contaminants at a molecular level.

"We have the tools to look at general contaminants (at UM)," Moore said. "We're

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trying to identify what processes move contaminants through watersheds.”

Their work has run from near the Clark Fork’s headwaters near Butte to just above Milltown – an area inside the boundaries of one of the country’s largest Superfund sites.

Moore has compiled a database of the Clark Fork for 15 years to see how the contamination has fluctuated “naturally” – that is, in response to runoff, river flow and erosion. Now, with work slated for the near future to bring about changes on the upper reaches of the river, Moore is in position to examine just how effective those changes are.

“In next few years they’ll be trying to restore and remediate contamination upstream, so we’ll be in a position to monitor the river’s response,” he said.

The seven “Pulse of the Planet” shows featuring Moore and Hochella will air in June and July.

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